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SUBJECT: MEDIA REACTION: IRAN CIA CANADA DAVOS IRAQ U.S.

AFRICA KUWAIT;BERLIN

- A. Lead Stories Summary
- B. (Iran) Nuclear Program
- C. (Council Of Europe) CIA Fact-Finding Committee
- D. (Canada) Outcome Of Elections
- E. (Economic) World Economic Forum In Davos
- F. (Iraq) Two Germans Kidnapped
- G. (U.S.) Congressional Mid-Term Elections
- H. (Africa) African Union Summit

UNITED STATES DEPARTMENT OF STATE
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I. (Kuwait) Power Struggle

A. Lead Stories Summary

HEADLINES

Two Engineers From Leipzig Kidnapped In Iraq (Frankfurter Allgemeine, Die Welt, Tagesspiegel, Frankfurter Rundschau)

Two Germans Kidnapped In Iraq (Sueddeutsche Zeitung, Berliner Zeitung)

Editorials focused on the announcement of DaimlerChrysler to cut up to 6,000 jobs in Germany, the outcome of the Canadian parliamentary elections, and the ruling of the Federal Court of Justice in the Kirch trial. ZDF-TV's early evening newscast heute and ARD-TV's early evening newscast Tagesschau opened with stories on the kidnapping of two Germans in Iraq.

B. (Iran) Nuclear Program

1. "The Diplomatic Sticks"

Martin Winter commented in center-left Sueddeutsche Zeitung of Munich (1/25):

"Given that there is no realistic military option against Iran, Europe's course remains the only possible path. But it must be accelerated. After the failure to convince Tehran with economic incentives, Europe must emphasize its determination and not just wait for the United Nations. The EU has accepted the global responsibility for the negotiations; it must now bear the responsibility and move ahead. Instead of talking about weapons, it should threaten the Tehran regime with painful travel restrictions and economic sanctions. Only if the European diplomacy becomes more robust, would there be a chance for a peaceful solution. If it is necessary, we have to agree to Iranian nuclear enrichment in Russia. The argument that Iran is holding the whip hand with its energy resources is incorrect. We know that the weapon of oil has its limits, and Iran's economic situation is so complex that it should not be reduced to the issue of oil. Given that the country's population grows so rapidly, Iran must create one million jobs each year. This requires investments, technology and know-how, which Iran cannot acquire in isolation. Beyond the usual ideological smoke, every country considers its practical interests. Credible European threats could help speed up this process in

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Tehran."

C. (Council Of Europe) CIA Fact-Finding Committee

1. Peter Kapern argued on national radio station Deutschlandfunk of Cologne (1/25):

" The reactions to Marty's report make clear that the fearless Swiss investigator hit the nail on the head. The report is shameful for the United States and Europe.. The CIA captured more than one hundred people in Europe,

transported them via European airports to torture centers outside of our continent.. The report is tough for Europeans: Their governments must have known about these renditions, Marty concludes. They are guilty.. The European governments have skeletons in the closet. They secretly allowed Washington to do this, hoping they would benefit from the illegal operations. In public, Europeans expressed criticism.. This behavior is now uncovered as hypocrisy."

2. "Assumptions"

Klaus-Dieter Frankenberger noted in center-right Frankfurter Allgemeine (1/25):

"Marty's interim report is a collection of known things, assumptions and probabilities. Marty suspects that the CIA transported more than one hundred people to third countries. Describing this as 'outsourcing' torture is an assumption. He is convinced that European governments and intelligence services knew about it. This is another assumption, which is probably true. The weakness of this investigation is that it cannot present new material and that it lacks evidence, e.g. on the existence of CIA prisons in Europe, but it still implies that every allegation is true."

3. "Many Accusations, Few Facts"

Center-left Sueddeutsche Zeitung of Munich (1/25) editorialized:

"There is a great need for more information on the role of European governments in the U.S. war on terror. Given that the U.S. government is not ready to provide information, the parliaments of the European countries and

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their investigation committees are the appropriate tools to clarify the issue. Their weapons are more powerful than those of the Council of Europe and the EU parliament. If the national parliaments are not ready for it due to a lack of interest or political rationale, the CIA scandal will be not be clarified to a large extent. Marty is not to blame."

4. "Europe's Sense of Self-Esteem"

Ewald Stein observed in business daily Handelsblatt of Duesseldorf (1/25):

"Marty does not simply make assertions. His assumption that the renditions could not have been executed without European governments should not be immediately relegated to the realm of fairy tales, because Marty believes all of Europe is involved. Of course, the silence of Europeans must not serve the CIA as a justification, but it is a good reason for the European governments to give up their politically motivated and hypocritical secrecy. They must finally deal with the facts. Their self-esteem and dignity demand that. This is about nothing less than the rule of law."

5. "At The Right Time"

Andreas Frster wrote in left-of-center Berliner Zeitung (1/25):

"Marty's report came out at the right time for Germany. The German discussion about a fact-finding committee tends to ignore the fact that it is not just supposed to deal with the BND activities during the Iraq war but also with the CIA flights through Germany, the rendition of terror suspects

and the cooperation with torture regimes. These could be the most troubling issues to the government and the BND. The investigation of BND activities in Iraq could have been influenced, they might think, but not the public discussion on the German security officials' cooperation with dubious partners."

D. (Canada) Outcome Of Elections

1. Rainer Stfeld commented on national radio station Deutschlandfunk of Cologne (1/25):

"Harper and his conservatives cannot thank the Martin liberals enough, for they would have been unable to bring about change on their own and with their own ideas. Neither

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their program nor their frontrunner created much attraction for the voters, but it was the weariness with the old government, their promises and their rituals that created this mood for change. As far as domestic policy is concerned, Harper's election signals a historical turnabout.. For the first time, a politician governs with a conservative platform, which comes from the distant West, from Ottawa. He is a regionally-oriented politician who wants to weaken the central state and not only wants to strengthen the provinces but also reduce the social security system and increase the responsibility of one's own.

"Harper and U.S. President Bush are two of a kind with the difference that, as of yesterday, no one any longer laughs at the future government leader. Whether it will be the G-8 or the UN, Washington now has a true friend in the North. The previous 'Bush bashing' has come to an end, and a missile shield and military cooperation now has a chance. For the time being, this does not matter for the voter, since Harper will not impair prosperity. And the lack of a majority will prevent conservative dreams from running wild."

2. "Canada's New Era"

Washington correspondent Matthias Rb argued in a front-page editorial in center-right Frankfurter Allgemeine (1/25):

"If a party loses a majority after 13 years in office, then this will be the change of an era.. The right-wing has defeated the left-wing; and the 'American' West, which has always suffered from an inferiority complex, taught the smug 'European' East a lesson and a change of generations will now take place.. That the majority of voters did not succumb to the false sense of security proclaimed by the liberals but followed Harper's 'time for change' is a sign that the natural voters' instinct for change in a democracy has not even been frozen in Canada's winter and there are a few distortions under the polished surface of Canada's sugarcoated world..

"Under Harper, if he is able to form a stable government, there will be a few gradual ideological shifts of the economic, political, and social ethical epicenter from the East to the West. This includes questioning the role of the state and its administration, the reduction of the VAT from seven to five percent, and greater self-determination for the provinces. With such steps, Harper also hopes to contain secession movements in Quebec.. Some indications are that a politician from the Western province

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of Alberta knows what the people in Qubec want. But it is also true that the situation is different once he is responsible for the country as a whole. That is why Harper will not rush things, but pursue a policy of small steps..

For Canadian circumstances, this is the definition of the
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change of an era."

3. "The Other America"

Centrist Der Tagesspiegel of Berlin (1/25) opined:

"The conservative election winner is propagating a new beginning but continues to pin his hopes on continuity. Harper is, as far as rhetoric is concerned, moving closer to the United States, and at the same time, emphasizes the dividing line between Canada and the United States.. Ottawa's new prime minister won the election but failed to reach a majority. Coalitions are unusual in Canada, but he is now dependent on finding supporters in parliament for larger plans. This weakens Harper but boosts hopes that we can expect a consensual policy that is oriented to the facts and is far away from the neo-conservative rhetoric the candidate used in the past. But we hardly expect a swing to the right, as opponents of the conservatives now fear for the 'other America.'"

4. "Harmonization Along The U.S. Northern Border"

Adrienne Woltersdorf argued in an editorial in leftist die tageszeitung of Berlin (1/25):

"Canada is moving to the right, and thus to a more-U.S.-friendly course.. The things we can now expect from conservative Stephen Harper will warm the hearts of the Bush administration again.for, over the past few years, the 9,000 kilometer long border between Canada and the United States was a dividing line rather than a region of joint responsibility.. New Premier Harper will soon reach out his hand to the United States. But it will depend on Harper's assertiveness towards his own opposition whether Canada will really take part in the U.S. missile program. He has a free hand in foreign policy but not in budget questions.and it is unclear whether Canada's environment and climate policies will change, an area in which Canada has steadfastly opposed U.S. policies. Thus far, Canada has been a model for all those Americans who have lost faith in the ignorant course of the Bush administration. But it is likely that Canada as

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the 'better America' will soon disappear from the map."

E. (Economic) World Economic Forum In Davos

1. "The Third World No Longer Exists, But Globalization Critics Do Not Want To Accept This"

Nikolaus Piper opined in an editorial in center-left Sueddeutsche Zeitung of Munich (1/25):

"The Davos meeting continues to be a U.S. dominated conference, but to a growing extent, other global regions are coming onto the scene. This year, China and India's rise are the focal point of the official program. This changed view fits the character of the Global Economic Forum, which has often been misunderstood. Its founder Klaus Schwab has been fighting for years for a kind of global, social market economy, something that does not fit the mainstream in Washington. But at issue is also economic reality.. According to the Economist, those countries occasionally still described as 'Third World' are responsible for a greater world social product than the classical industrialized countries..

"India and China have established themselves as new

heavyweights in the global economy. The Europeans are still undecided as to whether they want to take part in this adventure of globalization without any ifs and/or buts. The Americans have made up their minds but they harbor illusions in light of the harmlessness of their enormous budget and trade balance deficits.. It is likely that the participants in the Davos meeting and the protesters from Seattle from 1999 will never understand each other. But this is not necessary either, for the economic change in the world is taking place at such a rapid pace that it will make many old debates obsolete. For the moment, we wish all well-meaning people who travel to the World Social Summit in Caracas not to succumb to populist pied pipers. China, India, and the many poor countries show that globalization is not the problem but the solution."

2. "The World Listens"

Moritz Dbler editorialized in a front-page editorial in centrist Der Tagesspiegel of Berlin (1/25):

"When more than 2,000 of the most powerful people meet

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in Davos today, they will face a problem or a challenge: The title of the meeting is "The Creative Imperative." It probably means that we are all forced to be creative in order to survive in tomorrow's world.. If this term is to give the future world an imprint, then the participants in the Davos meeting have a lot of things to do.. Should it, for instance, be a foregone conclusion that people consume an increasing amount of energy, that they wage wars over it, and that they destroy the ecological balance in the world? No, this would be unreasonable. But what is the conclusion for governmental or company activities? The participants in the meeting expect chancellor Merkel to give answers today. She will open the conference today. The world is listening, and this is a challenge, too."

F. (Iraq) Two Germans Kidnapped

1. Jrg Armbruster commented in ARD-TV's (national channel one) late evening newscast Tagesthemen (1/24):

"Baghdad is dangerous, but Beiji is fatal. Everything that is bad in Iraq has gathered in Beiji, and they only wait to strike against U.S. soldiers, Iraqi police forces, and also against German engineers, once they happen to be in the region. All this should have been taken in consideration before companies made grave decisions and sent technicians to the heartland of the insurgents. Reconstruction is important, economic relations, too, and we all know that companies must fight hard to get new orders, but not at any price. There are still different approaches to link security and businesses: bring Iraqis to Germany, train them here and then use them at the plants in the country."

2. "The Business of Kidnappers"

Stefan Kornelius judged in an editorial in center-left Sueddeutsche Zeitung of Munich (1/25):

"It is necessary to make one thing clear: Germans and nationals from other nations can become victims of criminally motivated kidnappers, even if their cases do not appear in public. Kidnappings in Iraq are a business. Everyone can become a victim and a price will always have to be paid for their release.. But a new dangerous dynamic has developed in connection with the Chrobog and Osthoff kidnappings. An enormous pressure is burdening the German government and discretion and reassurance are not possible

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in such a situation. But it will not be useful either if the foreign minister blames others as soon as a German national is kidnapped. Greater restraint and professional discretion from politicians and the media would result in greater security."

3. "Kidnapping The Iraqi Way"

Brigitte Fehrle editorialized in left-of-center Berliner Zeitung (1/25):

"It may be a coincidence that Germans are affected again but it may also be possible that speculation and rumors about possibly high ransoms for Susanne Osthoff have fueled the kidnapping industry in Iraq. It may also be possible that the debate over possible cooperation of the German intelligence service with the Americans during the Iraq war reduced the inhibition threshold for the kidnapping of Germans.. Again the German government will do everything to achieve the release of the two men. At the beginning of Osthoff's kidnapping, Chancellor Merkel said Germany couldn't be blackmailed. She had to say this and will say this again. If the kidnappers, however, raise political demands, then Merkel's phrase will have cruel consequences. If they demand money, there is a real hope that their families and friend will see them again."

G. (U.S.) Congressional Mid-Term Elections

1. "Play It Again"

Michael Backfisch editorialized in business daily Handelsblatt of Duesseldorf (1/25):

"The majority of Americans would accept surveillance without permissions if it increases the protection against terror attacks. This is the concern the administration wants to exploit for its policy. Bush's advisor woke up the opposition by telling them that he wants to turn the Congressional elections in ten months into a referendum on national security.. However, Bush's policy is dangerous. The head of the White House is confronted with increasing allegations that he is building up an imperial presidency. Although Bush reached a compromise for the counter terrorism bill, he left himself a loophole by claiming the superiority for interpreting the document.. President Bush's emphasis on his presidential competences is politically tricky. The balance of power is of great value in the United States. Every change of the checks and balances between the

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President, Congress and the judicial authorities could come back as a boomerang. Whether his election strategy will be successful will depend on the level of fear Americans feel five years after September 11. If the fear remains great, Rove could lead the Republicans to another success in the Congressional midterm elections. If the concerns are decreasing, Bush's presidency will further erode."

H. (Africa) African Union Summit

1. "The Farce From Khartoum"

Dominic Johnson opined in an editorial in leftist die tageszeitung of Berlin (1/25):

"In reality, the continent can no longer afford this: The African Union (AU) meets every six months and each time, the participants waste precious time discussing whether the host of the meeting should also be the president for the

next six months.. Originally, Africa wanted to give itself a strong, united voice when it founded the AU according to the EU model, but it also copied the EU mistake which has not been resolved for years: a doubling of responsibilities by having a permanently working supranational commission and a rotating presidency.. It is also possible to set up a union of states without an institutionalized confusion like the UN and NATO. The still young AU can now avoid previous mistakes. Its international partners, on whose financing it depends, should make this a precondition for cooperation. Otherwise, the farce in Khartoum will not have been the last one."

I. (Kuwait) Power Struggle

1. "Abdicated"

Wolfgang Gnter Lerch noted in an editorial in center-right Frankfurter Allgemeine (1/25):

"In Kuwait the parliament and the Al Sabah family have now pressed Emir Saad al Abdallah Al Sabah to abdicate, even though he has only been a few days in office.. The parliament thought the new ruler should be a healthy and strong personality and opposed the official proclamation of the seriously ill Sheikh Saad. He demonstrated wisdom and abdicated. The fact that a parliament in an Arab Monarchy

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puts up so much resistance and is, in the end, even successful, is surprising. In addition, the parliamentarians also acted in the interest of the small country. for Kuwait is in close neighborhood to one of the most dangerous trouble spots in the region: Iraq. In this situation, a strong ruler is necessary."

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